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ABSTRACT

This report from the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, a federal agency that coordinates and promotes public and private efforts to enhance the employment of people with disabilities, describes committee activities during Fiscal Year 1999 (October 1, 1998- September 30, 1999). The first part of the report profiles six employment programs: (1) the Business Leadership Network; (2) the Workforce Recruitment Programs; (3) the High School/High Tech Program; (4) Project EMPLOY; (5) the Job Accommodation Network; and (6) a database for assisting in the development and financing of new businesses. The second part of the report discusses activities that seek to change negative attitudes and misconceptions about the employability of individuals with disabilities, to prepare future employees for the world of work, and to examine specific segments of the disability community that are experiencing higher rates of unemployment than the community as a whole. Educational kits, media outreach efforts, youth leadership and veteran forums, and international activities are described. The report includes a map illustrating the location of the programs and a list of committee members. (CR)

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PROGRAMS THAT WORK
PRODUCING PEOPLE AT WORK

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT OF
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

FISCAL YEAR 1999

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Programs That Work Producing People At Work

The 1999 Annual Report of
The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities

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The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities is a small, dynamic federal agency that communicates, coordinates and promotes public and private efforts to enhance the employment of people with disabilities. The President's Committee harnesses the skills, energy and expertise of the business community, labor organizations and government agencies to bring people with disabilities into America's workforce. The President's Committee provides up-to-date, accurate information, technical assistance and leadership to employers and employees with disabilities as they turn possibilities for work into actualities for employment. The Committee further promotes the employability of people with disabilities by modeling innovative programs and disseminating information about successful programs. The President's Committee informs the President of the progress and problems of maximizing employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Fiscal Year 1999 in Numbers

1,506,000	Job Accommodation Network (JAN) Web site hits
475,000	hits on the President's Committee's Web site
80,000	"Think Ability" education kits distributed nationwide
35,405	telephone queries received by JAN
1,136	students with disabilities participated in the Workforce Recruitment Program
1,300	students with disabilities participated in 55 High School/High Tech programs
650+	state and local committees on employment of people with disabilities in every state and territory
500+	employers involved in 19 state Business Leadership Networks
408	media inquiries about disability issues
300	volunteer members on the President's Committee
270	students with disabilities took part in 12 Youth Leadership Forums
162	newspaper and magazine articles generated about disability employment issues and the President's Committee

Key to cover photographs

left to right, top to bottom:

High School/High Tech Program, Albany, GA
Job Fair, Chicago, IL
High School/High Tech Program, Albany, GA
Job Fair, Chicago, IL
Job Fair, Washington, DC
Youth Leadership Forum, CT
Job Fair, Washington, DC
Youth Leadership Forum, PR
Evan Kemp Award presentation
Job Fair, Chicago, IL
President's Award honorees
Job Fair, Boston, MA

Programs That Work Producing People At Work

Annual Report
of the
President's Committee on Employment of
People with Disabilities

Fiscal Year 1999

"If America is to continue to grow and prosper, if we are to lead the challenging global economy of the 21st century, we cannot afford to ignore the talents, energy, and creativity of the 54 million Americans with disabilities."
—President William Jefferson Clinton

This report to the President, the Congress and the American public represents the work of the President's Committee during Fiscal Year 1999 (October 1, 1998-September 30, 1999). The Committee's mission is to communicate, coordinate and promote public and private efforts to enhance the employment of people with disabilities.

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The Chairman's Perspective

The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities exists for one purpose–developing and promoting programs that result in people with disabilities becoming employed. As our annual report shows, Fiscal Year 1999 was a good one for the President's Committee, employers and, most important, for people with disabilities who want to work.

Continued growth of newer programs, such as the Business Leadership Network (five new states), the Youth Leadership Forums (ten new states) and the High School/High Tech Program (27 new sites, including the first three sites under our Cultural Diversity Initiative), opened doors and changed attitudes across the country about the employability of people with disabilities. Project EMPLOY launched an education program that will bring people with cognitive disabilities out of the back rooms in the workplace and onto career paths that will enable them to exhibit their full range of skills and abilities.

Our established activities also continued to grow. The Workforce Recruitment Program (12 percent increase in hires) and the Job Accommodation Network both continued to see year-to-year growth, and we doubled our distribution of Education Kits to 80,000 kits to meet increased public demand.

Many people with disabilities are still unemployed. The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities continues to work on their behalf, opening doors to opportunity and self-sufficiency through employment.

We have come a long way, but still have a long way to go. Although more people with disabilities are finding work each year, many more are still unemployed. The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities continues to work on their behalf, opening doors to opportunity and self-sufficiency through employment. Only when people with disabilities have equality in the workplace will we truly be in control of our lives. Join with us as we move toward that day!

Sincerely,

Tony Coelho

Tony Coelho
Chairman

Putting People to Work Today

A 1998 Harris Survey conducted for the National Organization on Disability found that 72 percent of all unemployed working-age adults with disabilities would prefer to be working. The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities conducts a variety of programs to support the efforts of job seekers with disabilities to find work.

Profile

Safeco Insurance Company, a Washington state BLN member, hired Michelle Linville, a 33 year old blind woman, as a lead programmer-analyst. It cost Safeco less to buy the special equipment Michelle uses than the six month search to hire another programmer-analyst, who did not have a disability. As a bonus, Michelle, who is a single working mother and former welfare recipient, brings insights to her workplace that broaden the awareness of her co-workers about living with a disability.

Business Leadership Network

The Business Leadership Network (BLN) directly addresses the need expressed by employers for accurate information about hiring job candidates with disabilities and for access to qualified applicants with disabilities. Through business-to-business networks, more than 500 employers in 19 states who have benefitted from the skills and abilities of employees with disabilities share their experiences with employers who have yet to tap this largely underutilized applicant pool. Fears, misinformation and negative perceptions about people with disabilities are replaced by accurate, practical information from employers who live and conduct business in the same communities.

Each BLN sets its own agenda and priorities, but participants are urged to promote two strategies: personnel policies that include workers with disabilities and hiring practices that target candidates with disabilities. The BLN offers employers access to qualified applicants with disabilities, pertinent disability employment information, a network of other companies sharing information on specific disability employment issues and access to a largely untapped market for their goods and services.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation, underscored its commitment to the BLN program by entering into a cooperative plan with the President's Committee to promote BLNs and the employability of workers with disabilities to chamber members. Thomas J. Donohue, Chamber President and CEO, serves as the Head CEO of the national BLN. J. Tim Arnoult, President, Central Region, Bank of America and Margie Lewis, President and CEO, Parallax, Inc., serve on the national BLN Steering Group.

Examples of BLN activity in Fiscal Year 1999 include

- Five new BLNs were started: Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, Iowa and North Carolina.
- Texas BLN members mentored students with disabilities during national Groundhog Job Shadow Day, February 2, 1999.
- The District of Columbia BLN invited attorney David Fram, national employment law expert, to address more than 80 employers and community service providers about resolving ADA employment issues.
- The Florida BLN began to offer employers access to resumes of applicants with disabilities via the Internet.
- In its year-end report for calender 1998, the Colorado BLN reported placing 150 candidates with disabilities in jobs,

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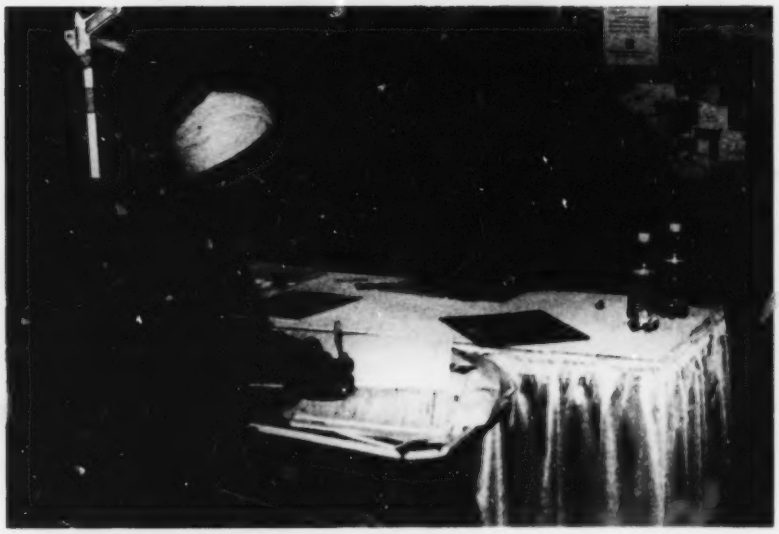


providing technical support to 100 businesses and educating over 750 employers about disability issues, such as a presentation by leading expert Richard Pimentel about cost-saving procedures for assisting injured or sick workers return to work.

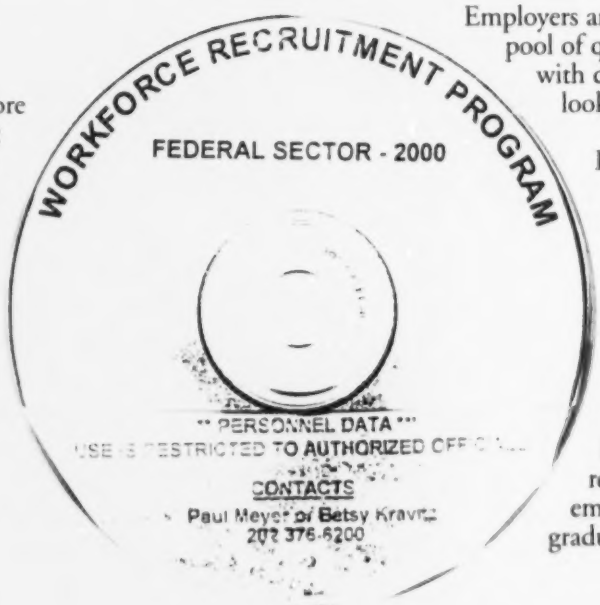
- Employers participating in the Business Leadership Network attended employment fairs targeting job seekers with disabilities in the District of Columbia, Illinois and Massachusetts. More than 65 employers interviewed more than 1,200 applicants with disabilities at these events. Employers reported a high level of satisfaction with the positive attitudes and skills of the applicants. A nation-wide consulting firm hired a computer graphic artist, a Federal agency hired three candidates and put them to work the next week, a public school transition to work program placed six students in jobs, and an engineering firm's recruiter left the event with three electrical engineer candidates.

WORKFORCE RECRUITMENT PROGRAM

The Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP) provides valuable summer work experience or full-time employment for college students or recent graduates with disabilities. Led by the President's Committee and the U. S. Department of Defense, the program enlists federal agencies to provide internships or full-time positions in a wide variety of fields. Each year, recruiters from the participating agencies interview and evaluate students with disabilities at college and university campuses across the nation and develop a database listing the qualifications of each student. The database is distributed to federal government agencies and private sector employers interested in hiring students with disabilities.

The WRP is an excellent way for students with disabilities in all fields of study to

- market their abilities to a wide variety of potential employers across the United States
- gain valuable work experience
- prove that people with disabilities can be excellent employees.



Employers are given access to a pool of qualified students with disabilities who are looking for work.

In Fiscal Year 1999, 1,136 students from 188 colleges and universities in 37 states and Puerto Rico were interviewed; 336 were hired. Many of the students hired for internships were retained as full-time employees after graduation.

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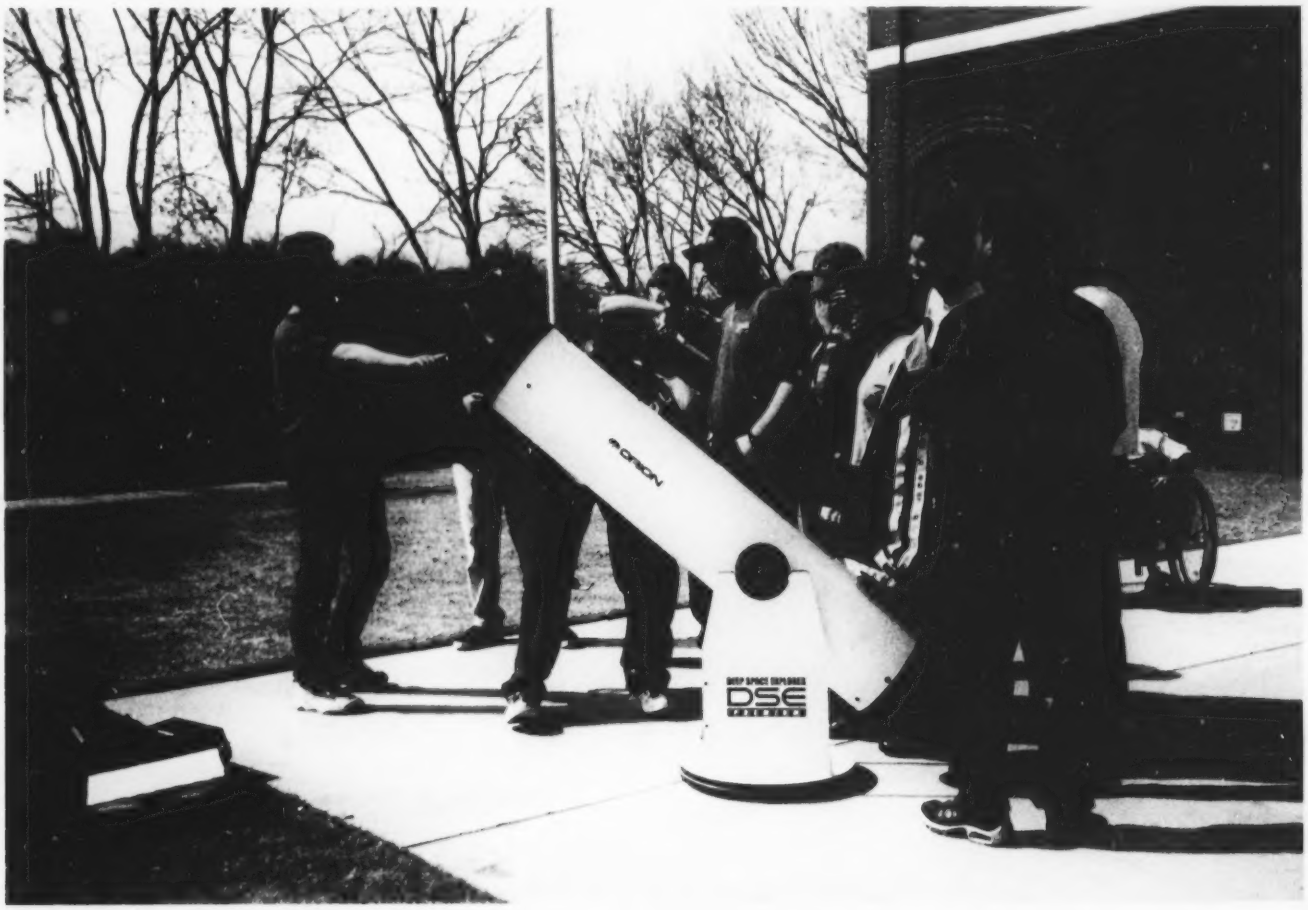
High School/High Tech Program

In order to maintain their world-wide leadership, America's science and technology industries must have a talented and dedicated workforce. The High School/High Tech Program (HS/HT) responds by providing site visits, mentoring, job shadowing and paid summer internships to high school students with disabilities to encourage them to pursue careers in science, mathematics, engineering or technology-related fields. More than 32 sites have been started in Georgia in the past two years, while 17 new programs, including three in minority communities, were started in other parts of the country during Fiscal Year 1999.

Profile

Thirteen Dougherty County School System (Albany, GA) High School/High Tech students attended launch preparations for the July 23rd launch of STS-93, the space shuttle Columbia. On board Columbia was a experiment designed by the students to study the effects of zero gravity on the metamorphosis of butterflies. Albany's HS/HT students had spent the last year designing the butterfly experiment in cooperation with students from Santiago, Chile. One of the students, Julie Blackburn, designed a banner and other artifacts carried on board the shuttle.



The Butterfly Experiment On Board banner above, designed by a Georgia High School/High Tech student participant, was carried aboard the Space Shuttle Columbia in 1999.

With public and private funding and the participation of employers such as NASA, the National Weather Service, IBM, Lockheed Martin Missions Systems, Cessna Aircraft Company, Mitsubishi Electric Power Products and Xerox, HS/HT participants are learning from the best America has to offer at 55 sites in 17 states. High School/High Tech students are preparing for the demands of the "high tech" workforce of the future by working in dynamic technical environments, observing mentors at work and planning a course for the future.

PROFILE

GRAHAM THOMPSON IS A SUCCESSFUL SEAMAN IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD IMMERSED IN HIGH TECHNOLOGY ABOARD THE 160-FOOT STATE-OF-THE-ART CUTTER HUDSON. BEFORE HIS HS/HT INTERNSHIP, GRAHAM FELT THAT HIS LEARNING DISABILITY WOULD PREVENT HIM FROM PURSUING A PROFESSIONAL CAREER. HE CREDITS HIS INTERNSHIP AT NASA'S KENNEDY SPACE CENTER LEARNING COMPUTER SKILLS WITH GIVING HIM THE CONFIDENCE TO PURSUE HIS DREAM TO JOIN THE COAST GUARD.

"I DREAMED OF COMBINING MY LOVE FOR THE OCEAN WITH A CAREER AND PRIMARILY DUE TO HIGH SCHOOL/HIGH TECH MY DREAM CAME TRUE," GRAHAM SAYS.

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Project EMPLOY

Equal pay, equal benefits and career advancement are reasonable expectations for most employees–unless they have one of several cognitive disabilities. Instead, these employees can expect minimal wages, reduced or non-existent benefits and dead-end, entry level jobs. Project EMPLOY seeks to unlock the underutilized potential of individuals with cognitive disabilities and open doors of opportunity for them.

After being formally announced at a ceremony in the Russell Senate Office Building in March 1999, Project EMPLOY began an extensive education program under the leadership of a National Advisory Board chaired by Michael R. Losey, President and CEO of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). Other members of the advisory body, which was announced in April 1999, are Bruce Dalziel, Senior Vice President for Financial Management, the Prudential Insurance Company of America, and Robert Perkins, Vice President of Public Affairs, DuPont Pharmaceuticals. The advisory body will recruit other corporate executives to make commitments for including people with a cognitive disability in their career development programs.

Working through organizations such as SHRM and the Association for People in Supported Employment, the President's Committee distributed more than 6,700 informational kits about the skills and abilities of people with cognitive impairments to human resources managers, public and private service providers and organizations of people with cognitive disabilities. The kits also contain information about people with cognitive disabilities who have successfully competed for advancement to more complex, higher level jobs and programs that support them.

"Employers hire people with disabilities for the same reason they hire anyone else. It makes good business sense."
—Joyce Trainer, Senior Vice President of Human Services for Manchester Savings Bank of Connecticut.

In September 1999, the President's Committee awarded four grants for one-year demonstration projects to be carried out during Fiscal Year 2000. Each grantee will place between 8 and 15 people with cognitive disabilities into competitive jobs which pay more than minimum wage, include benefits and have career potential; expand existing projects to serve additional geographic areas or industries; and provide training for 50 to 100 providers to replicate Project EMPLOY. Grants were awarded to the following non-profits

- The Institute for Community Inclusion, Boston, MA
- The Arc of Delaware, Wilmington, DE
- Best Buddies JOBS, Miami, FL
- Transcen, Inc., Rockville, MD.

Profiles

Barbara Bender is a person with a cognitive disability who was hired as a field administration clerk by Dupont Pharmaceuticals. Her initial tasks consisted of sorting and distributing mail, labeling folders, filing documents and computer scanning. Her supervisor, Anne Thomas, talks about Barbara's work: "Within a week or two Barbara had a real good feel for what her responsibilities were, and they grew because she could foresee other things she could do besides what she was asked to do."

Molly Reece, another person with a cognitive disability, was hired by the Defense Contract Management District East to do clerical work. Her duties have since changed; she now maintains the library, handles correspondence, prepares travel orders and does word processing. Supervisor Bruce Krasker says, "We showed her how to maintain the library, and, before we knew it, she was doing that by herself." Co-worker Jean Marie Faris calls Molly extremely easy to work with and says, "As one of the attorneys in the office, I rely very much on the support staff; and I rely on Molly to the same extent that I would rely on any other support staff member."

JOB ACCOMMODATION NETWORK

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) provides solutions to accommodation problems encountered by employers and their employees with disabilities at any point in the employment relationship. Sponsored by the President's Committee, with additional financial support from the Hartford Financial Services Group, JAN is a confidential, toll-free counseling and information service with comprehensive information about the employability of people with functional limitations. JAN information includes

- a historical database of more than 228,000 accommodations provided for real people in real jobs
- information about the Americans with Disabilities Act
- a World Wide Web site with information about accommodations for people with disabilities, relevant laws and links to other helpful sites on the Web, including a technical assistance document center.

Employers who have used JAN's services report $35.00 in savings for each dollar spent providing an accommodation. Savings were achieved through reduced workers compensation expenses, reduced training expenses because of lower employee turnover and increased productivity of the workers receiving the accommodation.

Situation: An elementary school teacher with hearing loss was having great difficulty hearing students due to background noise of screeching tables and chairs on the tiled classroom floor.

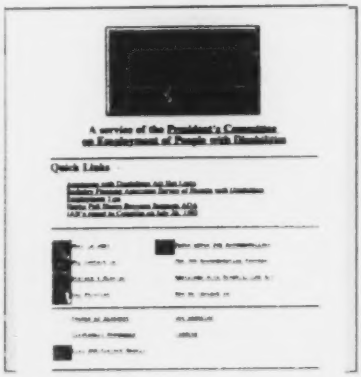
Solution: *The school system could not purchase carpeting for the classroom immediately, so the teacher was permitted to cut holes in tennis balls and place them on the legs of the tables and chairs. Although the tennis balls were not intended for this purpose, they eliminated the background noise of the screeching tables and chairs. Fortunately, the teacher had tennis-playing friends who were willing to donate their used tennis balls. As a result, the cost of the accommodation was $0.*

Reaching the Job Accommodation Network

Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday; 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Friday, Eastern Time

By phone: 1-800-526-7234 (Voice/TDD) for accommodation information, 1-800-ADA-WORK (1-800-232-9675) (Voice/TDD) for information about the Americans with Disabilities Act

e-mail: Jan@jan.icdi.wvu.edu
Web site: <http://janweb.icdi.wvu.edu/english/homeus.htm>



Situation: An electro-mechanical assembly worker acquired a cumulative wrist/hand trauma disorder that affected handling and fingering. This decreased his ability to perform the twisting motion needed to use a screwdriver.

Solution: *A rechargeable electric screwdriver was purchased to reduce repetitious wrist twisting. Electric screwdrivers were subsequently purchased for all employees as a preventative measure. Cost of accommodation for the employee with a disability: $65.*

Situation: As a result of diabetes, a productive employee in a retail business was experiencing fatigue and needed time during the day to administer medication. She was having difficulty performing her sales duties for a sustained period of time.

Solution: *The employee's schedule was altered to allow for a longer meal break and periods during the day to administer medication. Cost of accommodation: $0.*

SMALL BUSINESS AND SELF-EMPLOYMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Many enterprising people with disabilities are turning to small business ownership or self-employment as their career choice. Self-employment and small business ownership are attractive to people with disabilities for several reasons:

- flexible work schedule
- independence
- reduced transportation needs
- ability to respond to changing energy levels
- ability to create an accessible work environment.

Starting a business is a major task for anyone, but people with disabilities face additional barriers. Good information, together with attitude adjustments and better coordination by small business service providers will open doors for people with disabilities who want to be entrepreneurs.

As a member of the Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities, the President's Committee is collaborating with other federal organizations such as the Small Business Administration, the Rehabilitation Services Administration and the Social Security Administration to reduce those barriers. Together with those agencies, the President's Committee developed plans to establish self-employment support networks for people with disabilities in ten cities during 2000.

In addition, the President's Committee has developed a database of how-to information and resources for assistance in the development and financing of new businesses. The database became available on the Internet early in October 1999, along with a confidential advisory service via a toll-free telephone line.

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Two national businesses and a foundation supported scholastic excellence by students with disabilities through generous funding of eight scholarships in Fiscal Year 1999. The Fiscal Year 1999 scholarship winners were selected by a panel of President's Committee members. Students were evaluated on grade point averages, essays and letters of recommendation.

National fashion retailer Nordstrom Inc. funded five $2,000 scholarships for undergraduates with disabilities who are pursuing degrees in business.

Michael S. Arrington
Catlett, VA
Mary Washington College

Alexandria A. Fearn
Oakland, CA
University of California, Los Angeles

Michael C. Poore
Wilmington, NC
Campbell University

Sandra M. Redmon
Tega Cay, SC
University of South Carolina

Sarah A. Snyder
Kansas City, MO
University of Kansas

...continued on page 14

Preparing the Way For the Future

The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities also conducts activities that, while not putting people with disabilities to work directly, seek to change negative attitudes and misconceptions about their employability, prepare future employees for the world of work, and focus on specific segments of the disability community that are experiencing higher rates of unemployment than the community as a whole.

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

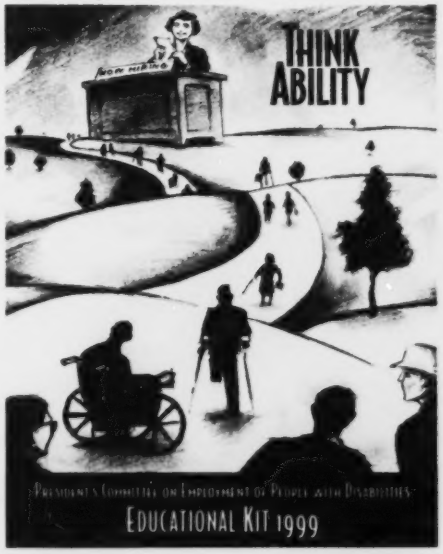
Information is a potent tool for changing negative attitudes and misinformed opinions. The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities conducts a comprehensive program providing current, accurate and relevant information to a wide audience about the employability of people with disabilities.

Education Kit

The President's Committee distributed 80,000 education kits to all 50 states and several territories. The fact sheets in the kits, which provide information on a variety of disability-related issues, were used by public and private employers, rehabilitation professionals, labor unions, governors' committees, advocates, veterans organizations, service providers, elected officials and educators in conjunction with the American with Disabilities Act anniversary, National Disability Employment Awareness Month programs, and year-round education efforts. The theme for the 1999 education kit was "Think Ability."

Typical uses for kit materials included:

CACI International, Inc. held a month-long education and awareness program as the kick-off for its year-long recruitment effort to locate qualified applicants with disabilities. The company developed and distributed informational sheets based on material from the education kit to all employees, displayed them in the reception area, and posted them

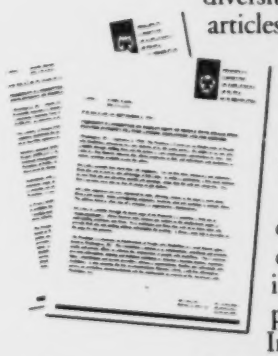


in common areas of the headquarters facility.

The Council on Disability Concerns of the Oklahoma Federal Executive Board conducted a leadership forum, based on kit materials, to help college students with disabilities develop skills for entering the work world. The forum consisted of eight monthly sessions, each focusing on a different topic, followed by a graduation ceremony.

The Commission for Children with Special Health Care Needs' Disability Support Group for High Schoolers and Young Adults, Paducah, KY, distributed educational materials from the kit at a booth at the Super Wal-Mart.

Home Box Office (HBO), New York City, held a panel discussion on disabilities in the workplace. The panel featured actor Christopher Reeve; Bill Paul, retired former Executive Vice President of United Technologies; Andy Imparato, General Counsel/Director of Policy, National Council on Disability; and Mikki Lam of Just One Break and was moderated by television news anchorwoman Bree Walker. The company's diversity newsletter, *Perspectives*, included articles based on the education kit fact sheets and interviews about disabilities in the workplace issues.



Media Outreach

The President's Committee conducts a strong media outreach program to educate the general public about disability-related employment issues in order to improve public perceptions of people with disabilities. In Fiscal Year 1999, the President's Committee responded to inquiries from

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more than 400 print and broadcast media outlets and provided information on Committee programs and key issues relating to the employment of people with disabilities to more than 1,000 other outlets. As a result, employers, government agencies, people with disabilities and the general public read, saw or heard from the President's Committee about

- the Americans with Disabilities Act
- statistical data on people with disabilities
- types and costs of reasonable accommodations
- persons with disabilities who are successful in their jobs and careers
- employment programs that serve people with disabilities
- barriers to employment for persons with disabilities.

Among the diverse national media who reported on the President's Committee's programs or other disability employment issues were

- *Business Week*
- *Newsweek*
- On-a Roll Radio
- *Investor's Business Daily*
- CSPAN
- *International Labor Report*
- *Diversity Monthly*
- Newspapers in Las Cruces, NM; San Diego, CA; Sacramento, CA; Pittsburgh, PA; Washington, DC; Atlanta, GA; Wilmington, NC; and St. Petersburg, FL.

The Disability Messenger
A guide to disability coverage
UNITY '99
Dual discrimination
Activists fight suicide legislation
Hate Crimes Act adds disabilities
New telecommunications services bypass minorities with disabilities

The Internet

www.pcepd.gov

The President's Committee's award-winning World Wide Web site provides current information about the agency's programs and activities and links to other valuable Web resources. In Fiscal Year 1999, the Committee's Web site received more than 475,000 hits. The Job Links page, which connects job seekers with disabilities directly to job listings in organizations and companies, has been the most-visited page of the site since its launch in April 1998. By the end of Fiscal Year 1999, 140 companies and organizations seeking to recruit and hire people with disabilities were listed on Job Links.

Educating the Press

"Shattering Crippling Images: Covering the 54 Million Americans with Disabilities," a panel organized by the President's Committee's Communications Subcommittee, was presented at the UNITY '99 Convention, a conference presented by UNITY: Journalists of Color, Inc., an alliance of the four national associations of journalists of color. The panel was an excellent opportunity to educate journalists that disability issues permeate all areas of the news. Panelists included

- President's Committee Vice Chair Sylvia Walker, Director, Center for Disability and Socioeconomic Policy Studies, Howard University
- President's Committee member Paul Igasaki, Vice Chair, U. S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
- Bree Walker, News Anchor, KNSD-TV, NBC
- Michelle Singletary, Financial News Reporter, The Washington Post
- Greg Smith, Host/Founder, On a Roll Talk Radio on Life and Disability
- Lucy Wong-Hernandez, Executive Director, Disabled Peoples International
- Betsy Bayha, Director, Technology Policy, World Institute on Disability.

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The Disability Messenger, a sample newspaper prepared by the Communications Subcommittee, was included in the registration packets of all 8,000 convention attendees. The stories in the newspaper illustrated how disability issues could be used in various sections of any newspaper. The stories serve as examples of how journalists can accurately report on these issues.

Publications
The President's Committee disseminates more than 65 easy-to-read, fact-filled documents covering a wide spectrum of topics related to the employment of people with disabilities. A publications list and the documents can be ordered by telephone (202-376-6200), fax (202-376-6868) or e-mail (info@pcepd.gov). They also can be downloaded from the Committee's Web site (www.pcepd.gov).

Youth Leadership Forums
Activities designed to build confidence, learn self-acceptance, develop a sense of teamwork and teach responsibility are the heart of the 12 Youth Leadership Forums (YLF) held in 1999. The ten new forums (California had previously done seven forums and Puerto Rico one) marked the first phase of a national expansion to all fifty states for the YLF program. Supported by start-up grants and technical assistance from the President's Committee, the states designed curriculums based on the model developed in California. Citizenship responsibilities were introduced through tours of state capitals, including meetings with governors and other elected officials. Forum attendees met role models,

Jesse Polier was planning to drop out of school and get married before attending the 1999 Iowa YLF at Iowa State University. Although he was initially not interested in the group activities at the forum, the staff eventually persuaded him to join in. By the end of the forum, he not only had formed friendships among the students and staff, but changed his mind and decided to return for his senior year of high school.
—Iowa YLF report

adults with disabilities who were successfully employed and had families. They conducted talent shows to learn teamwork and participated in confidence and leadership building outdoor exercises. The participants in these forums will be the managers and community leaders of tomorrow.

Reports from states that conducted Youth Leadership Forums in Fiscal Year 1999 showed that the forums were achieving their goals. Comments from the organizers reflect that students

- became more comfortable with their own disabilities and those of others
- learned to take charge of themselves and their lives
- learned to take responsibility for their own actions
- learned the value of teamwork
- gained confidence from seeing successful role models with disabilities similar to their own.

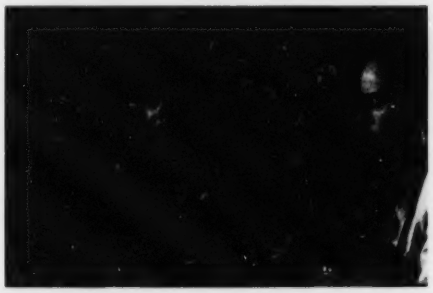
Cultural Diversity Program
The U.S. Census Bureau reports the following unemployment statistics regarding working-age minority individuals with disabilities:

- African-Americans with disabilities—72.2 percent
- African-Americans with severe disabilities—85.5 percent
- Hispanics with disabilities—51.9 percent
- Hispanics with severe disabilities—75.4 percent.

These extraordinary unemployment rates for minorities with disabilities are dramatically higher than the 48 percent rate for all people with disabilities.

The Cultural Diversity Initiative of the President's Committee harnesses the resources of national minority advocacy organizations to reduce unemployment rates for minorities with disabilities. Together with the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) and Howard University, the President's Committee has been working with organizations representing diverse minority communities, including African Americans, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Native Americans, to develop strategies for reducing the unemployment of people with disabilities within each minority community.

The President's Committee has been working with organizations representing diverse minority communities...to develop strategies for reducing the unemployment of people with disabilities within each minority community.



- Supported by funds from OSERS, the President's Committee conducted the third "New Leadership Development for Minorities with Disabilities" training session. Over the three years of the training series, 118 individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds have returned to their communities ready to work on employment issues.
- The NAACP established a High School/High Tech program in Baltimore, MD.
- The Urban League of Nebraska established High School/High Tech programs in Lincoln and Omaha, NE.

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

...continued from page 10

Nike sponsored its second annual $2,500 scholarship for a student pursuing a degree in sports or recreation management, sports marketing, sports medicine or sports and recreation equipment retailing.

Michael Scott Mohr
Sterling, IL
University of Illinois

The ELA Foundation awarded two fellowships of $2,000 each for women graduate students studying, researching and writing on disability policy.

Debra Leigh Cole
Washington, DC
Gallaudet University

Selene Faer Dalton-Kumins
Decatur, GA
Emory University School of Law

- The Harlem Task Force on Minorities with Disabilities conducted a job fair. Three hundred applicants with disabilities discussed employment possibilities with 10 employers.

DISABLED VETERANS FORUMS

Each year, more than 20,000 veterans with disabilities return home to resume their civilian lives, hoping to have families and the jobs necessary to support them. Unfortunately, two out of three veterans with disabilities will not find work, even though today's unemployment rate is the lowest in many years and employers are complaining about not being able to find enough workers.

The President's Committee's focuses attention on the issues faced by veterans with disabilities who are seeking employment by conducting regional forums at which the Committee learns directly from veterans, employers and employment and training service providers about the problems encountered by veterans as they look for work. Information from the forums helps national leaders develop strategies for responding to the issues raised at the forums.

In Fiscal Year 1999, forums were held in San Diego, CA; Indianapolis, IN; and Norfolk, VA. Reports outlining the findings of each forum were prepared and shared with key Federal agency heads, congressional offices and veterans service organizations. Issues identified included

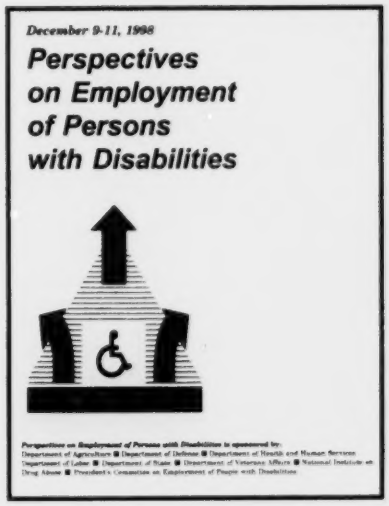
- poor interagency cooperation
- lack of proper pre-discharge preparation of departing service personnel with disabilities
- lack of employment support for the growing number of homeless veterans with disabilities
- need for regulations to implement the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to support the employment of veterans with disabilities.

Recommendations from the forums have resulted in

- support for more contracting-out of rehabilitation services for veterans with disabilities following a model used in Indiana
- increased attention to the implementation issues facing veterans with disabilities in the new Workforce Investment Act programs
- increased support for the employment issues facing homeless veterans.

17TH ANNUAL PERSPECTIVES CONFERENCE

The 17th annual "Perspectives on Employment of Persons with Disabilities" conference, sponsored by the President's Committee and eight other Federal agencies and departments, provided 400 Federal managers and staff new and updated information for facilitating employment opportunities for people with disabilities throughout the Federal government. The conference's 23 workshops provided the latest accurate information on personnel policies and practices, technology, reasonable accommodation and available resources.



Conference keynote speakers covered diverse topics:

- The Honorable Rudy de Leon, Under Secretary for Defense for Personnel and Readiness, reaffirmed the commitment of the Department of Defense to hiring people with disabilities, particularly through the President's Committee's Workforce Recruitment Program.
- Andy Imparato, General Counsel and Policy Director, National Council on Disability, discussed the disparate treatment that persons with mental disabilities receive from employers.
- Becky Ogle, Executive Director, Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities, discussed the activities of the task force, including information about the task force committee focused on the role of the

Federal government as an employer of people with disabilities.

- Karen Ginsberg, Director General of the Equity and Diversity Directorate of Canada, shared the employment experience of Canadians with disabilities.
- Allan Bergman, President and CEO, Brain Injury Association, Inc., challenged the audience by pointing out that in spite of recent progress in lowering the unemployment rate of people with disabilities, there is still a need for significant effort to bring the rate into line with that of the general population.
- Bobby Silverstein, Director, Center for the Study and Advancement of Disability Policy, George Washington University, chronicled the efforts behind the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Federal agencies co-sponsoring the December 1998 conference included the departments of Agriculture, Defense, Health and Human Services, Labor, State and Veterans Affairs, and the National Council on Disability and National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Drug Abuse.

left to right: LINKAGES employee Jill Rickgauer, James Click, President Clinton, Laura Hershey, Joyce Bender

Awards

In 1999, the President's Committee honored four individuals who made exceptional contributions to public awareness of the empowerment and employment potential of people with disabilities.

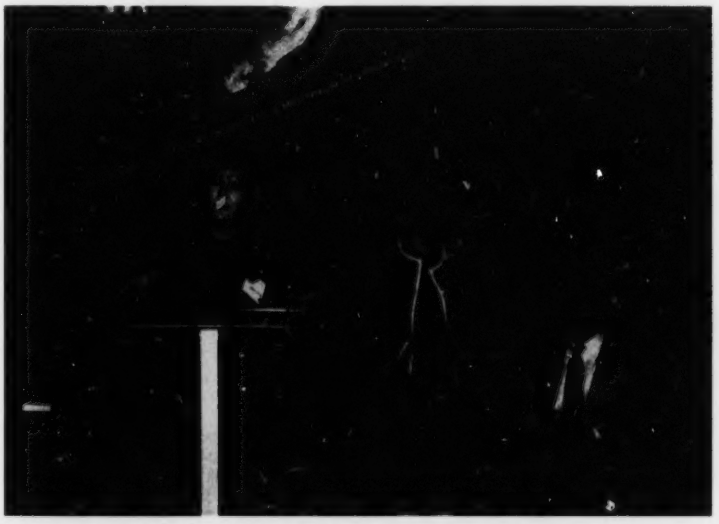
President's Award

Joyce Bender, President
Bender Consulting Services, Inc.
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

James H. Click, Jr., President
LINKAGES
Tucson, Arizona

Laura Hershey, Interim Executive Director
Disability Center for Independent Living
Denver, Colorado

The President's Award is America's highest honor for civilians. The President's Committee nominates individuals for the President's Award for achievement in furthering the employment and empowerment of people with disabilities. The awards were presented by President William Clinton in the East Room of the White House.



left to right: Sandra Brock, Aida Alvarez, Administrator of the Small Business Administration, and John Lancaster

Evan Kemp Entrepreneurship Award
Sandra Brock, Owner
First Class Packaging, Inc.
San Diego, California

This award recognizes an individual with a disability who has displayed the exemplary skills, energy, leadership, initiative and courage necessary to establish and operate a successful business venture in the private sector. The award is named for the late Evan Kemp, former U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Chairman, businessman and disability rights leader, for the example and leadership he demonstrated as a highly successful entrepreneur with a disability. The award was presented as part of the Small Business Administration's 1999 Small Business Week Kick-off event.

Award Recipient Biographies

Joyce Bender is involved in a variety of national, state and local activities devoted to enhancing the employment of people with disabilities, including the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities' Executive Board. Bender is President of Bender Consulting Services (BCS), which hires people with disabilities who have expertise in information technologies. BCS contracts its employees as consultants to client companies. Bender recently founded the Pittsburgh Disability Employment Project for Freedom, a non-profit organization that trains people with disabilities and provides them work opportunities in the information technology networking industry

James Click founded and is president of the non-profit LINKAGES program in Tucson, AZ. LINKAGES connects employers with job seekers with disabilities. Nearly 80 employers have hired more than 170 individuals with disabilities, including 35 hired by Click himself for his automobile dealerships.

Laura Hershey initiated the PASS Participants Rights Campaign, a national coalition to protect the rights of individuals taking part in the Social Security Administration's Plan to Achieve Self-Support. Hershey, interim Executive Director of Denver's Disability Center for Independent Living, is a grass roots leader in the national disability community and a staunch advocate for the civil rights of women, particularly those with disabilities.

Sandra Brock is the owner of First Class Packaging, Inc., a custom packaging company that serves 210 customers with annual sales exceeding $1.5 million. In addition to hiring people with disabilities and former welfare recipients among her 18 full time workers, Brock works through a local disability organization to recruit individuals with psychiatric disabilities when she needs temporary workers.

KEY TO MAP

■ WORKFORCE RECRUITMENT PROGRAM

Recruiters interviewed students with disabilities for the Workforce Recruitment Program at 188 colleges in these 38 states and territories in Fiscal Year 1999.

Alabama
Arizona
Arkansas
California
Colorado
Connecticut
Delaware
District of Columbia
Florida
Georgia
Idaho
Illinois
Kansas
Kentucky
Maryland
Massachusetts
Michigan
Missouri
Montana
New Jersey
New Mexico
New York
North Carolina
North Dakota
Ohio
Oklahoma
Oregon
Pennsylvania
Puerto Rico
South Carolina
South Dakota
Tennessee
Texas
Utah
Virginia
Washington
West Virginia
Wisconsin

▲ BUSINESS LEADERSHIP NETWORK SITES

Business Leadership Networks were active in these 19 locations in Fiscal Year 1999.

Arizona
Arkansas
California
Colorado
Connecticut
District of Columbia
Florida
Georgia
Iowa
Maryland
Michigan
Missouri
Montana
North Carolina
Oregon
Texas
Virginia
Washington
Wyoming

● HIGH SCHOOL/HIGH TECH SITES

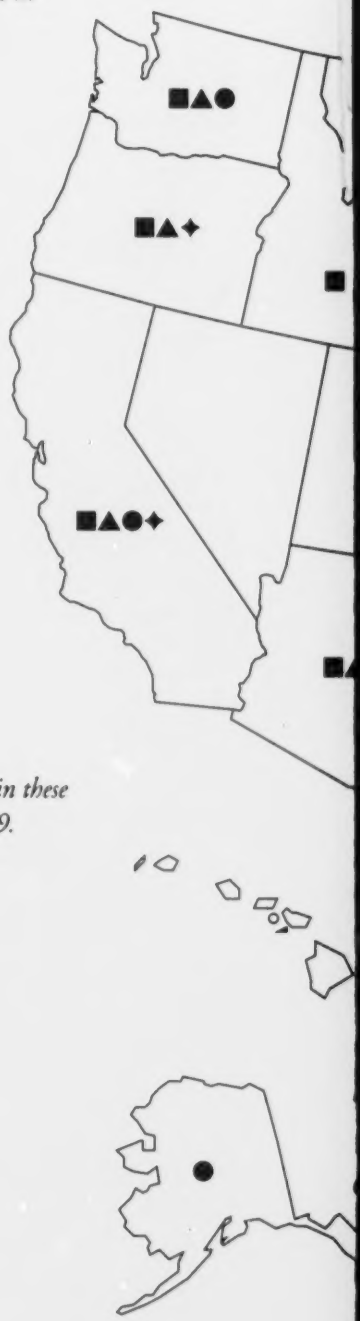
There were 55 High School/High Tech programs in these 17 states during Fiscal Year 1999.

Alabama
Alaska
California
District of Columbia
Florida
Georgia
Indiana
Iowa
Maryland
Nebraska
New Jersey
Ohio
Oklahoma
Pennsylvania
Texas
Virginia
Washington

✦ YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM

There were Youth Leadership Forum programs in these 12 states and territories during Fiscal Year 1999.

Alabama
California
Connecticut
District of Columbia
Iowa
Louisiana
Minnesota
Ohio
Oregon
Puerto Rico
South Dakota
Wyoming



(D.C.)

International Activities

The United States is recognized around the world for its experience and expertise in programs and policies for people with disabilities. The President's Committee has been pleased to contribute to international efforts to increase employment and other opportunities for people with disabilities around the world:

- It trained U.S. Department of State labor officers on policy and programs for employment of people with disabilities in the U.S.
- It hosted a 21-person delegation from the European Union as part of the United States-European Union Study Tour, part of the New Trans-Atlantic Agenda established in 1998 between the United States and the European Union. The President's Committee organized a week-long program of experts on the broad range of American policies, programs and laws for people with disabilities, including employment.
- It co-sponsored an international conference on independent living in Washington, D.C. Other co-sponsors included the Social Security Administration, the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services and the National Council on Disability.

Two activities in particular promise to have a direct effect on the employability of people with disabilities in Europe and Vietnam.

- The President's Committee continued its work with U.S. Vietnam Assistance for the Handicapped, a private organization based in the United States, and the government of Vietnam to ensure that people with disabilities are included in all aspects of Vietnamese culture, including employment. Following the 1998 passage of a disability policy law inspired by the Americans with Disabilities Act, the President's Committee helped to establish a four-person technical assistance office in Hanoi, Vietnam, to assist in the laws' implementation. After opening with a special reception in May, the office and the Vietnamese Ministry of Construction organized a conference on the development and implementation of a national building access code for people with disabilities. The code process, which will include technical assistance conferences and an exchange program with experts from the United States, will be followed by an employment initiative.

- The President's Committee and the U.S. Department of Labor presented case studies for the "Harnessing the Information Society to Raise Employment Levels for People with Disabilities" conference in October 1998 in Madrid, Spain. The conference examined the potential of technology for improving the employment possibilities of people with disabilities.

President's Committee Members

The mission of the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities is to facilitate public and private efforts to enhance the employment of people with disabilities. The Chairman and Vice Chairs are appointed by the President of the United States. All other members are appointed by the Chairman. All members serve as volunteers, without compensation, to develop programs that have the potential to maximize employment opportunities for people with disabilities. The following individuals serve on the President's Committee.

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President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities
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